

VLR-6/19/96

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Travis Lake Historic District  
other names/site number VDHR Site No. ~~16-349-23~~ 16-5009

2. Location

street & number Travis Lake Road, Fort A. P. Hill N/A not for publication  
city or town Bowling Green vicinity  
state Virginia code VA county Caroline code 033 zip code 22427

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination     request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets     does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant     nationally     statewide X locally. (     See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property X meets     does not meet the National Register criteria. (     See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] Director of Resource Information Oct. 4, 1996  
Signature of commenting or other official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_  
    entered in the National Register. \_\_\_\_\_  
    See continuation sheet. \_\_\_\_\_  
    determined eligible for the National Register. \_\_\_\_\_  
    See continuation sheet. \_\_\_\_\_  
    determined not eligible for the National Register. \_\_\_\_\_  
    removed from the National Register. \_\_\_\_\_  
    other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Classification****Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

private  
 public-local  
 public-State  
 public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

building(s)  
 district  
 site  
 structure  
 object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4	4	buildings
1		sites
2	2	structures
		objects
7	6	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use****Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Category	Subcategory
DOMESTIC	camp
DOMESTIC	institutional housing
LANDSCAPE	natural feature
INDUSTRY	waterworks
AGRICULTURE	animal facility
RECREATION & CULTURE	outdoor recreation

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Category	Subcategory
DOMESTIC	institutional housing
RECREATION AND CULTURE	outdoor recreation
LANDSCAPE	natural feature

**7. Description****Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and Early 20th Century  
 American Movements

Other: Rustic Style

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	CONCRETE
walls	WOOD
	SYNTHETICS
roof	STONE
other	EARTH
	ASPHALT

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

#### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE  
MILITARY

#### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

#### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

#### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past fifty years.

#### Period of Significance

1864-1945

#### Significant Dates

1938-39

1941

#### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

#### Architect/Builder

unknown

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

#### Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

#### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey  
# \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record  
# \_\_\_\_\_

#### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

#### Name of repository:

\_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**Acreage of Property approximately 150 acres**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	296220	4224920	3	17	296050 4224230
2	17	296550	4223990	4	17	295840 4224230

X See continuation sheet.**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title	<u>J. Daniel Pezzoni</u>	date	<u>August 16, 1995</u>
organization	<u>J. Daniel Pezzoni, Preservation Consultant</u>	telephone	<u>(540) 366-0787</u>
street & number	<u>PO Box 7825</u>	zip code	<u>24019-0825</u>
city or town	<u>Roanoke</u> state <u>VA</u>		

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets****Maps**A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.**Photographs**Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name United States of America contact: Commander, Fort A. P. Hill  
 street & number Attn: ANAP-CD telephone (804) 633-8366  
 city or town Bowling Green state VA zip code 22427-5000

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 1/2 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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## NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

### Summary

The Travis Lake Historic District occupies approximately 150 acres of the northern part of Fort A. P. Hill in Caroline County, Virginia, approximately six miles north of the town of Bowling Green. The district lies in the midst of gently rolling, forested topography at the headwaters of Goldenvale Creek, a tributary of the Rappahannock River. The dominant feature of the district is Travis Lake, the upper part of which covers thirty acres (the lower half of the lake, located below a former mill dam, is largely excluded from the district). The shores of the lake are forested with beeches, oaks, and pines and an understory of mountain laurel and dogwood, and the lake surface supports water lilies and other aquatic plants. Travis Lake Road (which follows the course of an antebellum road) hugs the shore on its east and north sides, connecting to a gravel road that follows the other shores of the lake. Occupying a knoll at the northeast end of the lake is a large log residence constructed in 1938-39 and known as the Lodge. Below the Lodge is the former mill dam, which forms part of the bed of Travis Lake Road. At the north end of the dam stands a complex of secondary dwellings and farm buildings. Liberty Baptist Church, an antebellum brick building also proposed for National Register listing, stands about a half mile to the west of the district.

### Inventory

Entries give the resource name, date or period of construction, Fort A. P. Hill installation number followed by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources site number in parentheses, contributing or noncontributing status, physical and historical description, and sources of information.

#### 1. Travis Lake. Antebellum. Contributing site.

The thirty-acre upper part of Travis Lake has maintained its present form since at least the Civil War, at which time it served as the Saunders Mill Pond. F. M. Travis acquired the lake and mill seat by the turn of the twentieth century. The relatively steep lake shores have been wooded since the mid-nineteenth century, providing lumber to the Travis sawmill and probably sawmills that preceded it. The lake and lake shores have been used for fishing, boating, and hunting since at least the nineteenth century, although hunting is now restricted. (Sources: "Map of Caroline County;" *Washington Post*, February 5, 1968.)

#### 2. The Lodge. 1938-39. SS025 (16-349-23). Contributing building.

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**Description (continued)**

The Lodge is a rambling one-story Rustic-style fishing retreat constructed in 1938-39 on a wooded bluff overlooking Travis Lake. The building is shaped like a flattened "U" with a central section and two flanking wings facing east, all constructed of saddle-notched logs (see plan in Exhibit C). The gable roof features Craftsman-influenced log gable brackets and plain rafter tails, square-edged slate shingle sheathing, and several shed dormers with beaded board siding. Rising at the junctures of the central section and the two wings are large sandstone fieldstone chimneys with rectangular profiles (the foundation features similar stonework). Centered on the east facade of the central section is a front entry sheltered by a modern gabled stoop with slate roofing and wood shingling in the gable. The entry has double doors constructed of beaded battens set at a diagonal, with wrought iron strap hinges and knockers. The west facade of the building looks out over Travis Lake and features a porch (now enclosed) with massive log posts and brackets. Flanking the porch are two short bedroom wings. Other exterior features include modern casement windows (similar in appearance to the original steel casements), modern picture windows, white concrete daubing that contrasts with the dark brown of the stained logs, and an exterior stair on the south wing gable end that provides access to a sleeping garret (a similar garret at the north end of the building is reached by an interior stair). A stairwell at the north end of the building provides access to the basement.

The front entrance opens into a large living hall that has stone fireplaces at each end and is spanned by roof trusses with heavy timbers mortise-and-tenoned and pegged together. The hall also has rough wooden mantel shelves supported by stone corbels, pegged floorboards, varnished log walls, and modern rustic furnishings. From the hall, two doors lead to the former porch (now enclosed as a dining room) that features a flagstone floor and modern wood bar. The south wing contains three bedrooms and a passageway; the north wing contains the dining room, a modernized kitchen, and a butler's pantry with original wood and glass cabinets. Throughout the interior are varnished wooden walls and ceilings, and batten doors with Z-braces and decorative strap hinges and latches. The basement has stone walls and metal ash-pit clean-out doors manufactured by the Donley Brothers Company of Cleveland, Ohio.

The north and south wings embrace a roughly circular turn-around on the east side of the building, bordered by sandstone retaining walls and reached by a yucca-lined drive that curves down to Travis Lake Road. On the building's west side are flagstone and concrete patios and walkways. One concrete walkway descends to a roughly circular parking area in front of the boat house (inventory entry 4). Standing off the north end of the building are a modern barbecue shelter with T1-11 siding and a louvered cupola vent, and a modern garbage can shelter. Standing to the west of the building is a small wood-shingled fire hydrant housing.

**Description (continued)**

The Lodge was completed in 1939 for Washington, D.C. patent attorney Charles M. Thomas and his wife, Katherine Gregory. Thomas purchased Travis Lake from the Dickinson Land Corporation in 1937; in 1939, the value of buildings on his property jumped from \$750 to \$17,150, indicating the construction of the Lodge and associated buildings. The government purchased the 621-acre property in 1941 and used it as bachelor officers quarters, an officers dining facility and club, and temporary family housing. Local people remember boating on the lake and dancing at the Lodge during World War II. (Sources: Plaque in house; Evans, "A History of Fort A. P. Hill;" Bill Broaddus, Ken Clark, Helen Travis Crawford, and Joe Medley interviews; Winter and Pezzoni, *A Phase I Cultural Resources Inventory of Fort A. P. Hill*; Caroline County tax records, 1937-1942, and Deed Book 110, p. 61.)

**3. Bath House.** 1951. TT0252 (16-349-27). Noncontributing building.

This one-story frame building was apparently built in 1951, although it may incorporate an earlier building. The classical/colonial building has wide novelty siding that gives the effect of rustication, scalloped friezeboards, a metal-sheathed hip roof with a cupola, a round window on the north elevation, a poured concrete foundation (with evidence of alterations to the superstructure above), modernized exterior doors, fenestration, and interior, and a modern deck overlooking the lake. The bathhouse occupies the site of an early-twentieth-century picnic shelter. (Sources: Travis Lake historical description; *Richmond News Leader*, February 29 and September 29, 1952; Caroline County Deed Book 89, p. 232.)

**4. Boat House.** Fourth quarter 20th c. Noncontributing building.

One-story frame building with T1-11 siding, an asphalt-shingled front-gable roof, and a poured concrete foundation and floor.

**5. Dam.** Early twentieth century. Contributing structure.

Portions of this dam may date to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but presently visible features appear to date to an early-twentieth-century reworking by mill owner F. M. Travis. Travis Lake Road passes over the dam, which has sides reinforced with granite riprap. At the dam's south end is the present spillway--identified as a "waste way" in a 1920 plat--which features a poured concrete lip and dual steel culverts passing under the road. At the dam's north end are several poured concrete features that may be associated with the F. M. Travis Mill, including a wall facing the lake with an iron handle that may have served to lift a door to permit

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**Description (continued)**

the flow of water into the mill. (Source: Caroline County Deed Book 89, p. 232; Helen Travis Crawford interview.)

**6. Garage Apartment.** Ca. 1939. SS0253 (16-349-29). Noncontributing building.

The Thomases, owners of the Lodge at Travis Lake, employed a chauffeur who is said to have resided in the upper level of this much altered garage/apartment. In the early 1950s, a sergeant assigned to fire protection in the Travis Lake area resided in the apartment. The one-story frame dwelling sits on a concrete basement level (formerly with garage bays, now enclosed) and has an asphalt-shingled front-gable roof, vinyl siding, modern exterior doors and fenestration, and a modern front deck overlooking Travis Lake. (Sources: Travis Lake historical description; *Richmond News Leader*, February 29 and September 29, 1952.)

**7. House.** Ca. 1939. SS0254 (16-349-28). Contributing building.

This one-story frame house was probably built about 1939 as a guest cottage associated with the Lodge. It was remodeled in 1951-52 as housing for noncommissioned officers and their families. The house has vinyl siding, an asphalt-shingled hip roof, a poured concrete foundation, a brick chimney on the rear elevation, and mostly modern one-over-one-sash windows. The interior features rooms separated by French doors. It is possible the house was built in 1937 by the Dickinson Land Company. (Sources: Travis Lake historical description; *Richmond News Leader*, February 29 and September 29, 1952.)

**8. Barn.** Ca. 1939. TT0257 (16-349-30). Contributing building.

This well-preserved frame barn was probably built about 1939 to serve as stables and hay storage for the nearby Lodge. The barn has a lower level for horses (and possibly horse-drawn vehicles) and an upper level for hay storage. Other features include a metal-sheathed front-gable roof, weatherboard and vertical board sheathing, a poured concrete foundation, Dutch doors with plain strap hinges, and four-light and six-light windows. (Source: Travis Lake historical description.)

**9. Chicken House.** Ca. 1939. TT0256 (16-349-31). Contributing building.

This well-preserved frame chicken house was apparently built to serve the Lodge, located across Travis Lake. The building has a form typical of twentieth-century chicken houses: a long southern exposure with evidence of more south-facing windows than the present two, and a shed

**Description (continued)**

roof. Other features include metal roofing, weatherboard siding, a poured concrete foundation, and small hatches at floor level that may have enabled the resident fowl to come and go as they pleased, or that may have been used in cleaning the interior. (Source: Travis Lake historical description.)

**10. Springhouse.** Ca. 1939. TT0255 (16-349-32). Contributing structure.

This small springhouse was apparently built to serve the Lodge, located across Travis Lake. The frame building has an asphalt-shingled front-gable roof, vinyl siding, and a high poured concrete foundation. The springhouse was probably used for the preservation of milk and other perishable foods. (Source: Travis Lake historical description.)

**11. Water Point.** Third quarter 20th c. P00258. Noncontributing structure.

Small concrete-block structure apparently used as a pump house or to monitor water flow.

**12. Water Tank.** Third quarter 20th c. PFO267. Noncontributing structure.

Cylindrical steel water tank located off Spring Road near the northern boundary of the district.

**13. Privy.** Second half 20th c. Noncontributing building.

Frame latrine of standard Fort A. P. Hill form with corrugated metal siding and a shed roof. The latrine appears to be associated with a small bivouac area.

**Integrity Statement**

The Travis Lake Historic District possesses good over-all architectural and historical integrity. The district's principal architectural resource--the 1938-39 Lodge--retains its original spatial configuration and exterior and interior features and finishes. The only substantive modern changes to the building are the substitution of modern thermal casement windows for the original casements, and the conversion of the porch overlooking Travis Lake into a dining room (this latter change did not compromise the original log porch supports and flagstone floor and is therefore reversible.) The farm and residential buildings associated with the Lodge display varying degrees of exterior architectural integrity, but most retain their distinguishing architectural features. The wooded character of the shores of Travis Lake, and historic drives,

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### Description (continued)

stone retaining walls, and other landscape features contribute to the high integrity of the district's setting.

The resource count in section 5 shows seven contributing resources and six noncontributing resources, which, superficially, is a poor contributing ratio. The ratio is skewed by including in the count small, modern, noncontributing auxiliary buildings and structures such as the boat house, privy, and water point. The two principal contributing resources--the Lodge and Travis Lake--constitute the major character-defining features of the district.

### Architectural Analysis

The Travis Lake Historic District has been the scene of continuous development since at least the late antebellum period. In 1864, Saunders Mill occupied a mill seat on the headwaters of Goldenvale Creek, its mill pond corresponding to the upper section of the present Travis Lake.<sup>1</sup> By 1920, the property had passed to local merchant F. M. Travis. A plat from the period (included as Exhibit B) shows the mill--probably a relatively small building--perched towards the north end of a mill dam with a "waste-way" or overflow outlet at the dam's south end. On the hillside north of the dam stood the miller's house. An icehouse at the south end of the pond suggests another commercial use for the property, and a "picnic hall" near the location of the present bath house provides the first evidence for recreational activity at the pond.<sup>2</sup>

The architectural character of the lake was transformed in the late 1930s when Washington attorney Charles M. Thomas and his wife Katherine Gregory acquired the property. The Thomases constructed the Lodge in 1938-39, a rambling retreat overlooking the lake, with saddle-notched log walls, log porch posts, substantial stone chimneys, and other elements of the Rustic Style.<sup>3</sup> The Lodge harmonizes with its natural surroundings, augmented by the sandstone retaining walls and flagstone walkways that connect the building to the lake shore and to other outdoor spaces.<sup>4</sup> In architectural counterpoint to the Lodge stands the 1951 Bath House, a whimsical building with vaguely Classical or Colonial Revival features such as a cupola, a round window, and wide novelty siding. The other buildings associated with the Lodge--the two secondary residences and the farm buildings--are more modest in character, although their picturesque hillside siting contributes to the overall character of the complex.<sup>5</sup>

Description (continued)

Endnotes

1. "Map of Caroline County." The mill seat and pond were probably used earlier, probably by Benjamin Robinson, who operated a mill on Goldenvale Creek (Winter and Pezzoni, *Phase I Cultural Resources Inventory of Fort A. P. Hill*, 17). A 1920 plat shows an "old dam" downstream from the Saunders mill dam, in the general vicinity of the present crossing of Goldenvale Creek by the Engineer Road (Caroline County Deed Book 89, p. 232.) The bed of Engineer Road occupies a dam that impounds the lower part of Travis Lake, formed after 1950.
2. Caroline County Deed Book 89, p. 232. The plat, a 1920 revision of an 1893 plat, was drawn by F. M. Travis, who served as the county surveyor. The Travis Mill may have resembled the Moses Rolph grist mill near the Caroline County community of Sparta, a small, weatherboarded, frame building from the late nineteenth century pictured in Haley, *Caroline County: A Pictorial History*, 34. Above-ground remains of the ice house, miller's house, and picnic hall are apparently gone, although it is not inconceivable that elements of the latter two buildings are incorporated into buildings presently standing in the district.
3. The Lodge is the preeminent Rustic-style building in Caroline County, Virginia. An architectural survey of the county conducted in the early 1990s identified no other significant Rustic-style buildings (see PMA and Traceries, *Historic Architectural Survey of Caroline County*.)
4. Because the Lodge was occupied by the non-local Thomas family for only two years, little oral information is available on the construction of the building. An architect presumably designed the Lodge, probably one with offices in Washington, where the Thomases maintained their principal residence during the 1930s. A cursory search through back issues of *The Caroline Progress* failed to turn up information on the building. Some of the walls and walkways associated with the Lodge may have been constructed by the army--the lakeside parking area, for example, which would have accommodated the many individuals who frequented the Lodge during World War II.
5. Some of these buildings may actually have been built by the Dickinson Land Company, which owned Travis Lake from 1929 to 1937 and which owned buildings valued at \$750 in 1937 (Caroline County tax records).

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## NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### Summary

The Travis Lake Historic District, located at Fort A. P. Hill in Caroline County, Virginia, includes a range of historic resources dating from the antebellum period to the 1930s. The dominant feature of the approximately 150-acre district is Travis Lake itself, an antebellum mill pond bordered by mixed deciduous and conifer forest. In the late 1930s, the lake attracted the attention of Washington, D.C., attorney Charles M. Thomas, who built a rustic log lodge above the mill dam. When the area became part of the A. P. Hill Military Reservation in 1941, the lodge was converted to use as an officers club and quarters, and the lake and its wooded surroundings afforded recreational opportunities to army personnel. Lake Travis, the Lodge, and associated domestic and farm buildings today form one of the most intact historic resources at Fort A. P. Hill.

### Justification of Criteria

The Travis Lake Historic District is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C in the areas of architecture and military history. Travis Lake, with its forested shores, and the Rustic-style residence known as the Lodge together form an ensemble of considerable architectural sophistication. The architectural effect of the Lodge relies on its natural surroundings; likewise, the scenic qualities of the lake are complemented by the Lodge. The lake and lodge also figured in the Second World War history of the A. P. Hill Military Reservation by providing recreational opportunities to base personnel, thus playing a part in A. P. Hill's important contribution to the war effort. The period of significance for the district extends from 1864, the date of the earliest known documentation of the physical character of Travis Lake, to 1945, encompassing the Second World War history of the area. The district is eligible at the local level of significance.

### Acknowledgments

A number of individuals and organizations assisted in the preparation of this report. Terry Banks and Evelyn Peyton served as contacts for the Fort A. P. Hill Environmental Office. Len Winter and Ashley Neville served as the contacts for Gray & Pape, Inc. and reviewed the draft nomination. Others who provided assistance include Bill Broaddus and Helen Travis Crawford, descendents of former landowners in the district, Tim Bradley of the U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C., Judith Zvonkin of the Biography Division of the Washington, D.C., Public Library, Pat Jordan of the U.S. Patent Office, Bryson Clevinger of the Alderman Library, University of Virginia, and the staffs of the Caroline County Clerk of Court office, *The Caroline*

### Statement of Significance (continued)

*Progress*, the Roanoke Public Library, and the Library of Virginia.

### Historical Background

The upper part of Travis Lake corresponds to the antebellum Saunders Mill Pond, which appears on an 1864 map of Caroline County. A pond associated with the mill of Benjamin Robinson may have occupied the site in the 1700s.<sup>1</sup> After a period of apparent disuse following the Civil War, Francis Marion Travis (ca. 1849-1925) operated a mill at the pond in the 1890s. Travis, described as a "prominent merchant of New London [a nearby post office]," apparently ran his grist and sawmill until the 1920s.<sup>2</sup> The scenic qualities of the pond were acknowledged early. By 1920, a "picnic hall" had been constructed on a knoll overlooking the pond near the site of the present bath house.<sup>3</sup> In 1929, Harold V. Dickinson, of New York, purchased the pond and adjoining acreage, land which he transferred to the Dickinson Land Company. The land-company may have intended to resell the property soon after purchase, but the stock market crash of 1929 and the ensuing depression intervened. In 1936 or 1937, the company added a building or buildings to the property (boosting the value of buildings from \$300 to \$750), and in October 1937 the property was sold to Charles M. Thomas, of Washington, D.C.<sup>4</sup>

Charles McGill Thomas, a patent attorney, maintained an office in Washington from at least the late 1920s to 1963.<sup>5</sup> With his wife, Katherine Gregory, Thomas constructed a rustic summer retreat--later known as the Lodge--on the east shore of Travis Lake in 1938-39. The Thomases also apparently constructed the house, garage apartment (said to have been occupied by their chauffeur), and farm buildings at the north end of the dam, opposite the Lodge.<sup>6</sup> Their enjoyment of the Lodge proved short-lived; in 1941, the U.S. Army acquired the Thomas property and much of northeast Caroline County to form the A. P. Hill Military Reservation. A. P. Hill played an important role in the defensive and offensive operations of the United States military during World War II. The base provided the army much-needed maneuver and range area, and it was instrumental in training the forces that fought in North Africa and participated in the D-Day invasion--campaigns that contributed to the Allied victory over Nazi Germany.<sup>7</sup>

During World War II, Travis Lake provided recreational opportunities to military personnel and local civilians. Helen Travis Crawford, granddaughter of F. M. Travis, recalls attending dances at the Lodge and boating on the lake.<sup>8</sup> At various times during and after the war, the Lodge was used as temporary family housing, bachelor officer quarters, and an officers's open mess. In 1952, as part of a government probe of military spending, a U.S. representative alleged that the commanding general of the Second Army improperly spent \$27,000 to refurbish the building as

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**Statement of Significance (continued)**

his "personal hunting lodge." The same representative charged that "high Pentagon brass" and their "lady friends" attended parties at the building. The army replied that the Lodge was indeed used for parties and dances, since it served as the post Officers Club, but that only \$2,630 had been spent on its upkeep since 1941, and that part of that expense was offset by billeting fees paid by personnel quartered in the building.<sup>9</sup> In later years, rooms at the Lodge were rented out to sportsmen who fished and hunted at the lake.<sup>10</sup> Today, the Lodge continues to serve its original function as a retreat, available to military personnel and civilians, and boating and fishing facilities are available on Travis Lake. The area is now included in a wildlife refuge administered by the Army.

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**Statement of Significance (continued)**

**Endnotes**

1. Winter and Pezzoni, "Phase I Cultural Resources Inventory of Fort A. P. Hill," 17-18; "Map of Caroline County."
2. Caroline County Deed Book 89, p. 232; *Virginia State Gazetteer*; and *Caroline Progress*, June 22, 1933.
3. Caroline County Deed Book 89, p. 232.
4. Caroline County Deed Book 99, pp. 45, 46, 146 and 182; Deed Book 110, p. 61; and tax records for 1936 and 1937.
5. *Confidential Supplement*, 1548; Pat Jordan, personal communication. Thomas last registered with the U.S. Patent Office in 1963, at which time his professional address was 310 Shoreham Building, Washington, D.C. Attempts to uncover more information on Thomas from libraries, circuit courts, and state and district bars and bar associations in Virginia and Washington proved unsuccessful.
6. Bill Broaddus, personal communication; Caroline County tax records. The 1939 land book registered a jump in the value of buildings on the property from \$750 to \$17,150.
7. Winter and Pezzoni, *Phase I Cultural Resources Inventory of Fort A. P. Hill*, 100.
8. Helen Travis Crawford, personal communication.
9. *Richmond News Leader*, February 29 and September 29, 1952.
10. *Washington Post*, February 5, 1968. In 1968, the daily fee for a bed at the Lodge was \$1.00 and board was \$1.60.

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Travis Lake Historic District  
Caroline Co., Va.

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*Virginia State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1897-'98*. Richmond: Hill Printing Co., 1896.

*Washington Post* (Washington, D.C.).

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Wise, H. Alexander, Jr., Director, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, to Terry Banks, Fort A. P. Hill Environmental Office, July 10, 1995. Correspondence.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

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Caroline Co., Va.

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UTM References (continued)

5. E295490 N4223970      6. E295040 N4224330      7. E295120 N4224120

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundaries of the Travis Lake Historic District lie 500' beyond--parallel and concentric to--the loop traced by Travis Lake Road and the gravel road that follows the lake shore, as illustrated in Exhibit A. The boundaries are likely to include unidentified prehistoric and historic archaeological sites.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundaries of the Travis Lake Historic District are defined so as to include the buildings, lake, and wooded lake shores--the lake's viewshed--that together form a harmonious architectural whole. Rather than being passive setting unassociated with the historic and architectural character of the district's buildings, the lake and surrounding woods contribute directly to the architectural significance of the resource, thus warranting the inclusion of a relatively large acreage. The lower part of Travis Lake, because it dates to after the period of significance, is not included in the district, except for that portion that lies within 500' of Travis Lake Road.

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**PHOTOGRAPHS**

All photographs are of: Travis Lake Historic District, VDHR # 16-349-23

1. CREDIT: J. Daniel Pezzoni  
DATE: 1995  
NEGATIVE FILED: Virginia State Library, Richmond, Va.  
VIEW OF: East elevation of the Lodge; view facing west.  
NEG. NO.: VDHR # 14164  
FILE NO.: VDHR # 16-349-23  
PHOTO 1 of 8
2. CREDIT: J. Daniel Pezzoni  
DATE: 1995  
NEGATIVE FILED: Virginia State Library, Richmond, Va.  
VIEW OF: West elevation of the Lodge; view facing north.  
NEG. NO.: VDHR # 14164  
FILE NO.: VDHR # 16-349-23  
PHOTO 2 of 8
3. CREDIT: J. Daniel Pezzoni  
DATE: 1995  
NEGATIVE FILED: Virginia State Library, Richmond, Va.  
VIEW OF: Bath House; view facing south.  
NEG. NO.: VDHR # 14164  
FILE NO.: VDHR # 16-349-23  
PHOTO 3 of 8
4. CREDIT: J. Daniel Pezzoni  
DATE: 1995  
NEGATIVE FILED: Virginia State Library, Richmond, Va.  
VIEW OF: House (left) and Chauffeur's House (right); view facing west.  
NEG. NO.: VDHR # 14164  
FILE NO.: VDHR # 16-349-23  
PHOTO 4 of 8

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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Travis Lake Historic District  
Caroline Co., Va.

Section number Photo Page 15

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Photographs (continued)

5. CREDIT: J. Daniel Pezzoni  
DATE: 1995  
NEGATIVE FILED: Virginia State Library, Richmond, Va.  
VIEW OF: Barn; view facing east.  
NEG. NO.: VDHR # 14164  
FILE NO.: VDHR # 16-349-23  
PHOTO 5 of 8
6. CREDIT: J. Daniel Pezzoni  
DATE: 1995  
NEGATIVE FILED: Virginia State Library, Richmond, Va.  
VIEW OF: Travis Lake with dam in distance; view facing east.  
NEG. NO.: VDHR # 14164  
FILE NO.: VDHR # 16-349-23  
PHOTO 6 of 8
7. CREDIT: J. Daniel Pezzoni  
DATE: 1995  
NEGATIVE FILED: Virginia State Library, Richmond, Va.  
VIEW OF: Travis Lake; lower part with dam in center; view facing west.  
NEG. NO.: VDHR # 14164  
FILE NO.: VDHR # 16-349-23  
PHOTO 7 of 8
8. CREDIT: J. Daniel Pezzoni  
DATE: 1995  
NEGATIVE FILED: Virginia State Library, Richmond, Va.  
VIEW OF: Travis Lake, Liberty Branch inlet; view facing south.  
NEG. NO.: VDHR # 14164  
FILE NO.: VDHR # 16-349-23  
PHOTO 8 of 8

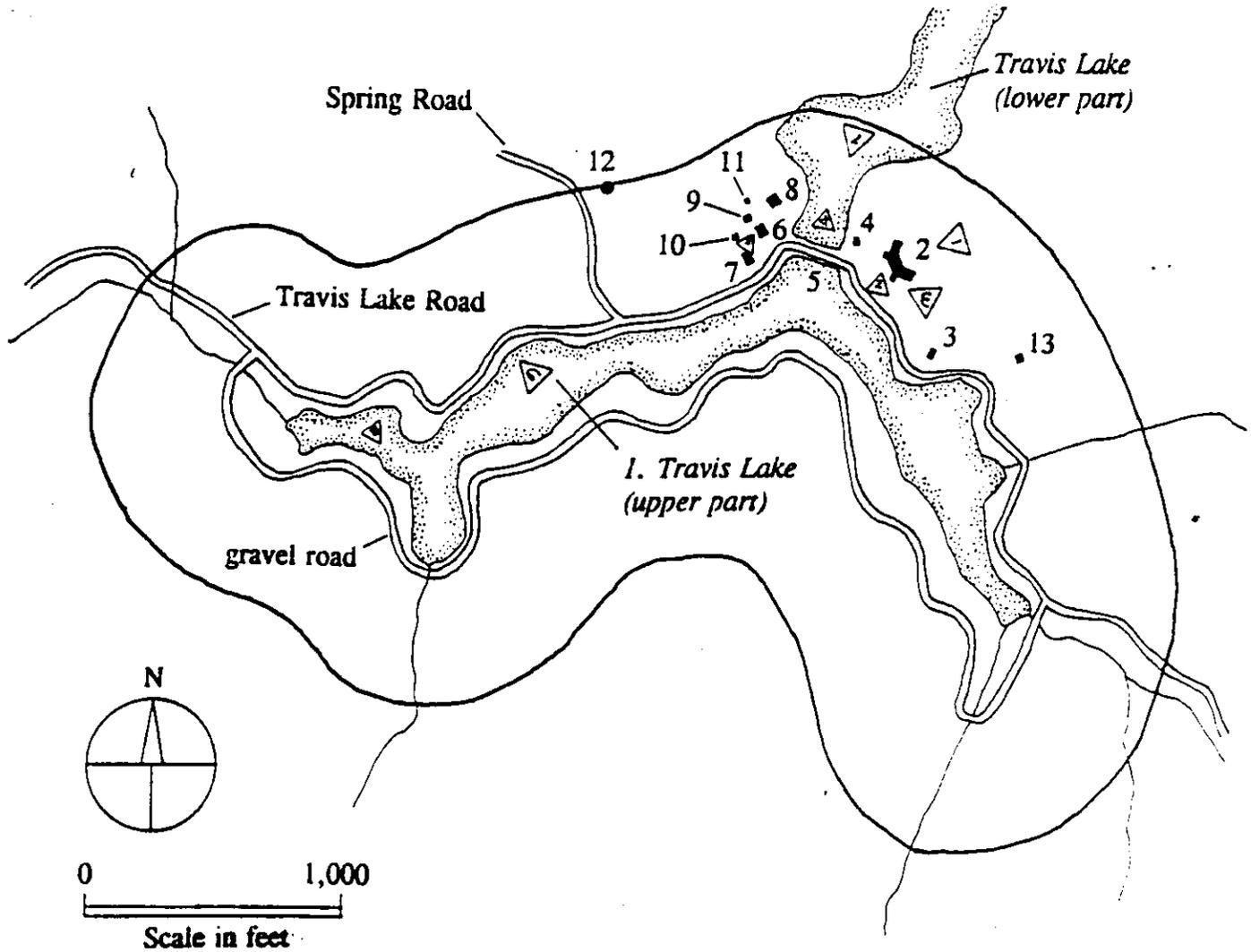


Exhibit A. Travis Lake Historic District. Boundaries indicated by heavy line. Triangles indicate number and direction of view of photographs accompanying the report. Key to buildings and structures:

- |                          |                  |                    |             |
|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| 16-5009 - 1. Travis Lake | - 5. Dam         | - 9. Chicken House | - 13. Privy |
| - 2. The Lodge           | - 6. Garage Apt. | - 10. Springhouse  |             |
| - 3. Bath House          | - 7. House       | - 11. Water Point  |             |
| - 4. Boat House          | - 8. Barn        | - 12. Water Tank   |             |

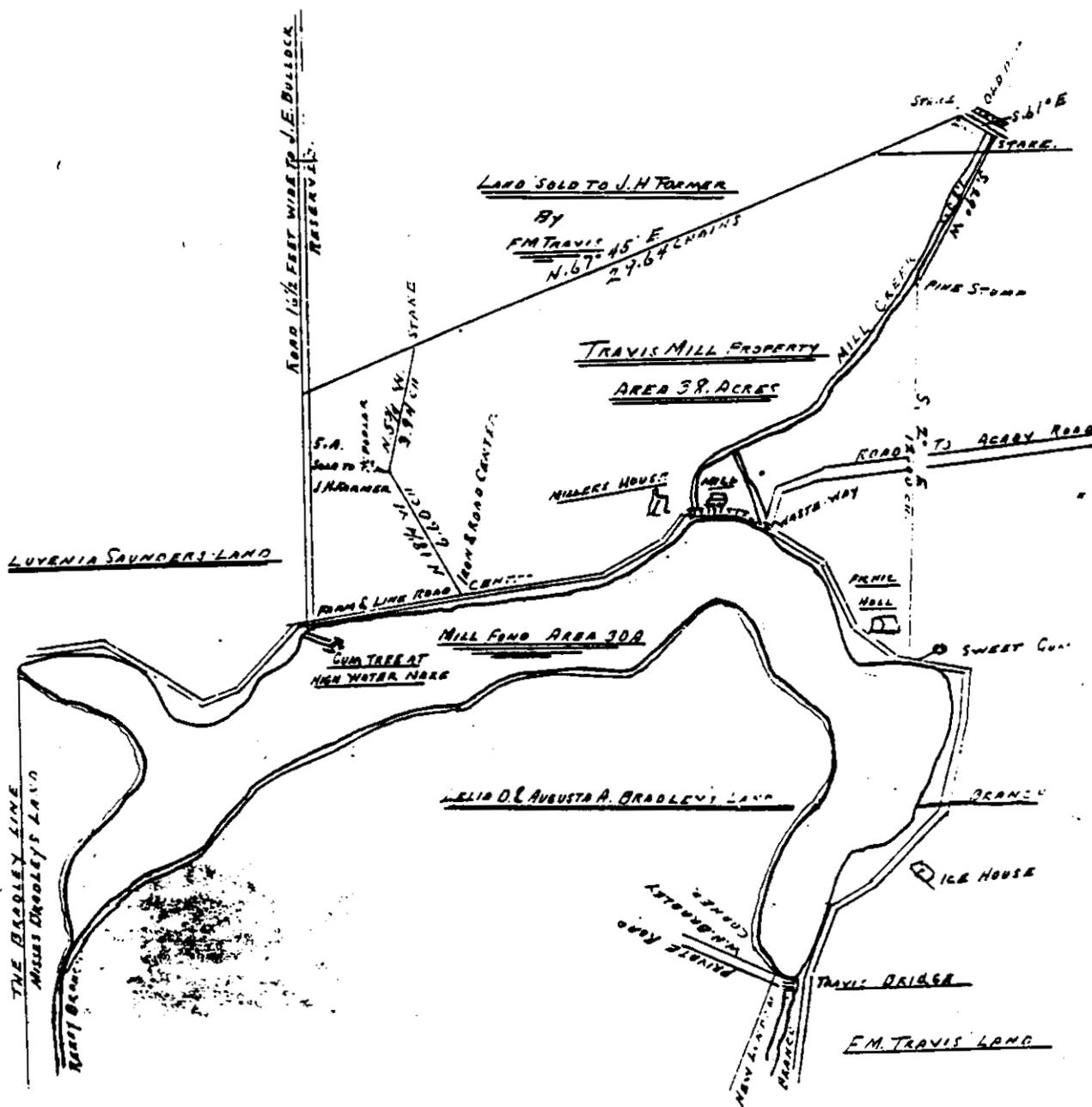


Exhibit B. Detail of a 1920 plat showing Travis Lake and associated resources from Caroline County Deed Book 89, p. 232. North is toward the top of the sheet. Not to scale.

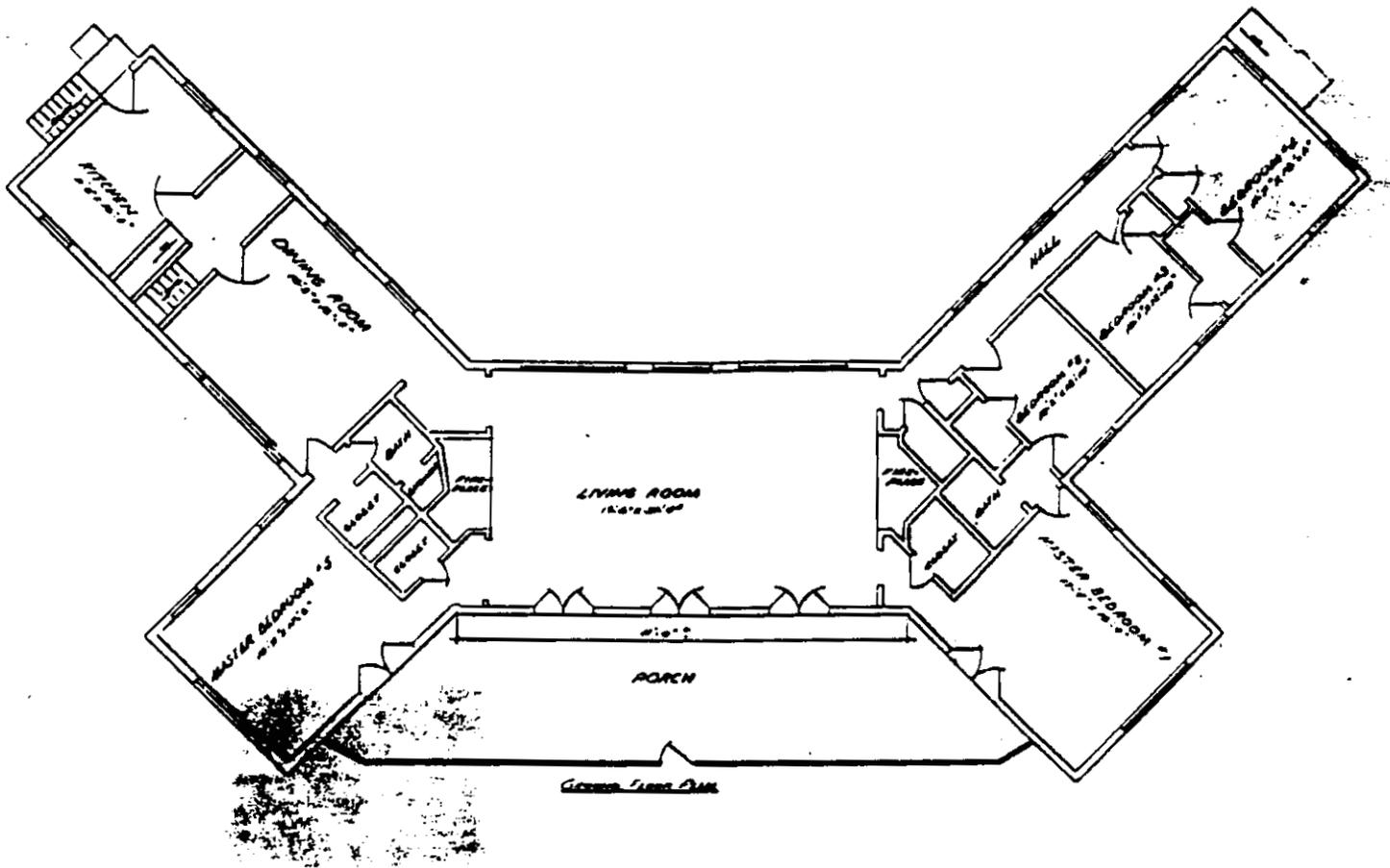
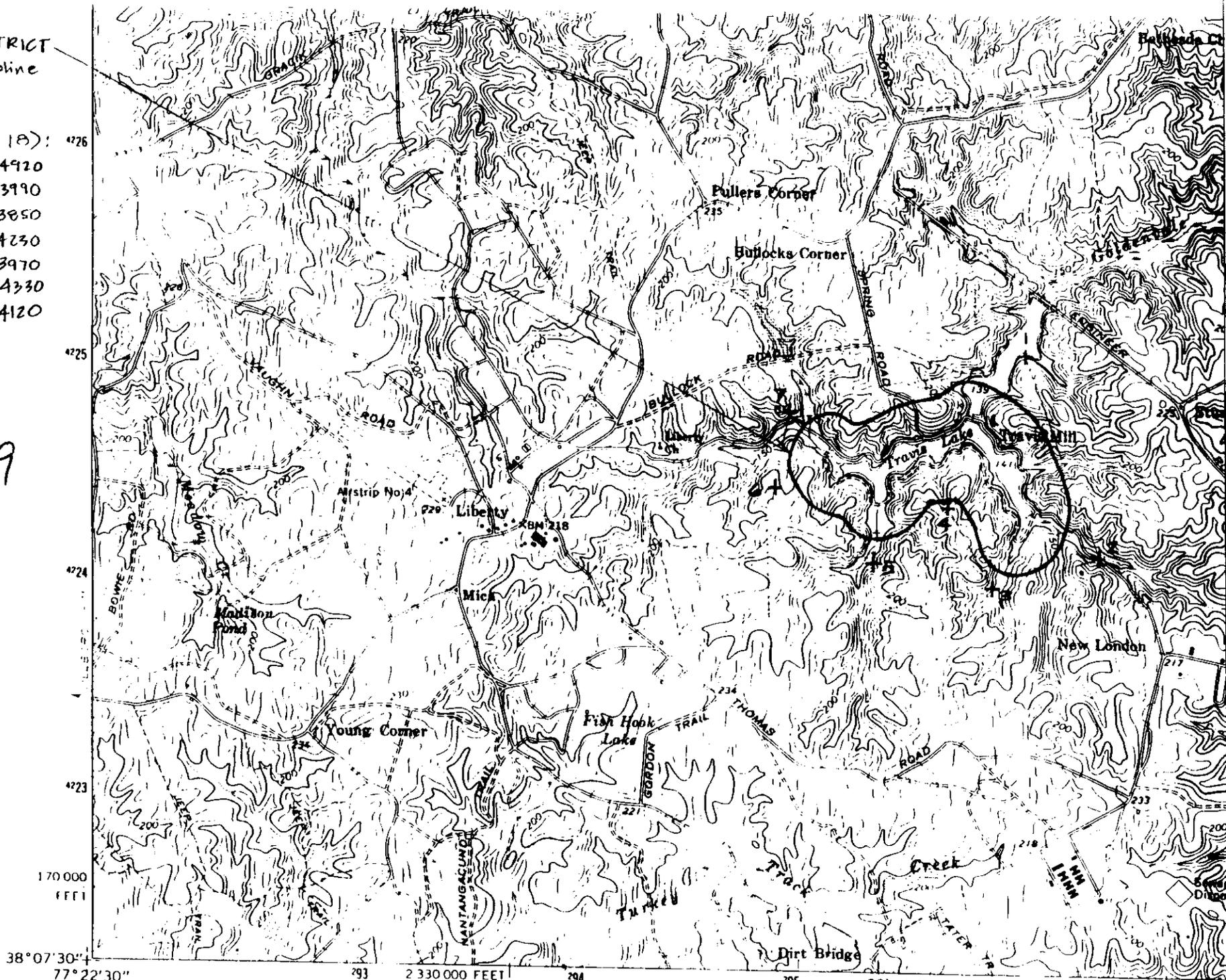


Exhibit C. The Lodge floor plan adapted from "Floor Layout SS0251," Drawing No. 36-76 from Fort A. P. Hill buildings and grounds records. Scale: 1" = 16'-6".

TRAVIS LAKE  
 HISTORIC DISTRICT  
 Ft. A. P. Hill, Caroline  
 Co., VA

UTM Ref.s (zone 18): 426  
 1. E296220 N4224920  
 2. E296550 N4223990  
 3. E296150 N4223850  
 4. E295840 N4224230  
 5. E295490 N4223970  
 6. E295040 N4224330  
 7. E295120 N4224120

016-5009



170 000  
 FFF1

38° 07' 30" N  
 77° 22' 30" W

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
 Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA  
 Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs  
 taken 1966. Field checked 1969

WOODFORD  
 5460 III SW

